

March 13, 2022

Honorable Sidney H. Stein
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: United States v. Victor Rivera, Case No. 21-CR-221 (SHS)

Dear Judge Stein:

I am writing this letter on behalf of and in support of Victor Rivera. My name is Natasha Villanueva Medina I am a previous employee of BPHN. Being a single divorced mother in a community where there was not much opportunities I took advantage and continued my education while sacrificing to earn my degree in Criminal Justice.

When I initially interviewed for the position at BPHN I had no experience working with the specific population. Mr. Rivera took a chance in hiring me. I must say it was a good decision in my career path. While at the organization I learned a lot of the different moving parts that helped the clients. I witnessed 1st hand Mr. Rivera caring for the staff and the clients. Mr. Rivera has made a big impression on me while at the organization he's respectful he is approachable and he listens.

During the beginning of the pandemic I had the privilege to work side-by-side with Mr. Rivera. Working in the community to give those who couldn't afford food clothing even small things as toys for children hygiene kits and the list goes on and on. I saw Mr. Rivera with his sweat and tears love and care for the community we served.

In the 4 years that I worked for the company I got to know Mr. Rivera a little more towards the end. I'm so grateful that he took a chance and gave me an opportunity to work with such a population. Mr. Rivera is a man who gives people opportunity and chances and he sees the good or the willingness and goes on his good instinct. He was always smiling in the office if I had a question he would not hesitate or seems bothered. He is always willing to assist.

I even had a client once who identified a very big need and I knew it was something that I had to go past my supervisor and the director and needed to go straight to him because I know how much he cares and I know if I went straight to him he would understand the urgency and he did he really cared for the clients and he wanted to make sure everybody was given an opportunity just as he was.

Mr. Rivera never tried to hide his past and that I admire because some people forget the trials and the tribulations they go through in life once they become successful but Mr. Rivera was never shy to admit his pass and that's admirable. His life history is not all negative, I hope no one forgets the good he has done.

I know that this case is something no one should turn their head for. This conviction not only affects his family but the many people who he helped. The people that looked up to him. The people who might of thought there was no hope, he is a living testimony that there is. I know Mr. Rivera is sorry for what has transpired. I know he is honest enough to admit that and take responsibility for his actions, because one thing about him is he is a man of his word.

In my experience working with the Criminal Justice system, I had the opportunity to help reintegration recently incarcerated individuals with many different categories and levels of crimes. In my professional opinion prison disabled them more than helped. When they had to return back to the communities many were scared. Some just gave up because prison was all they knew. Some shared their stories on what they actually experienced and learning from it was not one of them.

I believe in the Justice System I know the best decision will be made. I thank you Honorable Sidney H. Stein for taking the time out in reading and considering my letter. All I ask for is merciful, if possible, for Mr. Rivera.

Respectfully submitted,


Natasha Villanueva Medina